

Warner's Pond Task Force: Draft Criteria for Deliberation v2

Background:

We have revised the criteria document based on Task Force feedback. We will use these criteria later in our deliberations, to get a sense of group preferences and progress towards consensus. Prior to using these criteria, we expect to narrow the measures under consideration and package them into a set of discrete, comprehensive alternatives. For example, an alternative will not consist simply of "dredging" in a generic sense, but rather a specific approach towards dredging, likely combined with other recommendations to maximize the positive impact of dredging on the variety of factors we care about.

Once we have identified the alternatives we want to consider, we will ask Task Force members consider the full package of actions associated with each alternative and measure them against these criteria. The specific steps could involve something like the following:

- Each Task Force member completes a worksheet rating each of the alternatives against each of these criteria on some scale or scales. (Note that we have suggested some specific scales below, but the Task Force can decide if these make sense.)
- We share everyone's ratings and highlight key data, e.g.: average ratings for each alternative on each criterion, areas of strong alignment, and areas of significant difference.
- We use these ratings to help us discuss how well Task Force members think these alternatives achieve our goals, how to make them better, and which if any alternative is likely to garner a consensus. We could discuss questions like:
 - Why did some alternatives do better than others on certain criteria? What's the "story" behind the ratings?
 - Why were there strong differences on some of the ratings? Is this due to different preferences, different interpretations of the data, or something else? Can we try to address these differences/improve alignment?
 - What (if any) alternatives seem to have the potential to garner consensus? What key issues/differences would need to be addressed to reach that consensus?
- As we work to refine our recommendations and move towards consensus, we may repeat some version of this exercise to support consensus building.

Example instructions for using the criteria

- For all ratings: 1 means strongly disagree, 2 means disagree, 3 means neither agree nor disagree, 4 means agree, and 5 means strongly agree. You can also select N/A if you lack any data to provide a rating.
- For each criterion and alternative, rate your level of agreement with the statement on a scale of 1-5.
- For each criterion and alternative, rate the degree to which you agree with the statement, "I am certain about the relative accuracy of my rating." Certainty could be determined by the amount of available data, the reliability of this data, and/or your own opinion as to the degree of subjectivity your rating is based on.
- For each criterion, rate the degree to which you agree with the statement, "Meeting this specific criterion is important to achieving our Task Force mandate and goals, and the vision in *Envision Concord*."
- **In providing your ratings, please consider the interests and needs of the entire town. Try *not* to simply answer the question based on the needs of your own institution or constituent group.**
- **In providing your ratings, please compare each alternative against the status quo of no action.**

1. History and Character

Will this alternative preserve the historical character and cultural heritage of the area by:

- a. Maintaining or further protecting historical assets and uses of the waterbody and surrounding land (including Scout Island)?
- b. Enhancing the natural resource values of the waterbody and surrounding land (including Scout Island)?
- c. Improving or enhancing the natural environment by providing diverse plant communities, wildlife and aquatic habitats, or landscape features to the town's existing open space?
- d. Enhancing the visual appeal of the existing area/landscape?

2. Livability and Values

Will this alternative enhance Concord's desirability as a place to live by:

- a. Increasing the quality and quantity of recreational assets and programs for all socio-economic groups in the community?
- b. Increasing opportunities for public enjoyment and use of the waterbody and surrounding land, including physical and social (i.e., gathering) opportunities for the community?
- c. Contributing to improvements to public health, such as reducing exposure to mosquito and tick-borne diseases and/or water-borne contaminants?
- d. Enhancing the resilience of community infrastructure (roads, stormwater structures, wastewater/water supply facilities, fire prevention, emergency access)?

3. Mobility and Accessibility

Will this alternative maintain/increase connectivity to Town centers and access to services by vulnerable residents, by:

- a. Increasing transportation access by walking, biking, mobility devices, or waterways, etc.?
- b. Improving access to the water body and surrounding land to people of all mobilities and ages?

4. Ecological Sustainability

Will this alternative enhance the ecology/biodiversity of the water body and adjacent land by:

- a. Enhancing and improving wildlife habitat for diverse species, including rare or threatened species?
- b. Enhancing and improving fisheries habitat for diverse species?
- c. Enhancing and improving habitat to support diverse native plant communities?
- d. Improving water quality within the waterbody?
- e. Improving connectivity between different habitats to support migrating species?
- f. Providing a sustainable ecological condition over time?
- g. Improving the resilience of the natural resource area to flooding events?
- h. Contributing to improved water quality in the downstream riverine system (i.e. the Assabet River)?
- i. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and/or increasing carbon sequestering?
- j. Reducing dependence on synthetic chemicals?

5. Fiscal sustainability

Will this alternative support fiscal sustainability by:

- a. Using an identified and sustainable funding source?
- b. Minimizing the need for additional resources (staffing, space, equipment, and other direct or indirect costs)?
- c. Providing of cost recovery or cost savings?
- d. Generation of additional taxes, fees, or other revenue for Concord?
- e. Being feasible from technological, permitting, and engineering perspectives?